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Nicholas Van Handel and Colette H. Winn

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d’Auge, Marguerite, Renée Burlamacchi, and Jeanne du Laurens.

***Sin and Salvation in Early Modern France: Three Women’s Stories.* Ed. and intro. Colette H. Winn, trans. Nicholas Van Handel and Colette H. Winn.**

The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe: The Toronto Series 53 / Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 515. Toronto: Iter Press / Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2017. Pp. xiii, 97. ISBN 978-0-86698-571-0 (paperback) US\$34.95.

This collection of texts provides the first English translation of Marguerite d’Auge’s *Regrets* (1600), Renée Bulamacchi’s *Memoirs* (1623), and Jeanne du Laurens’s *Genealogy* (1631). Along with very useful notes concerning critical references and the text, this edition/translation also contains a thorough introduction, a chronology, a rich bibliography, and an index.

In the introduction, the editor Colette H. Winn details the lives of the three women. She then proceeds to study the texts by analyzing the authorship of d’Auge’s regrets, the commemorative nature of Burlamacchi’s and du Laurens’s texts, and the question of sin and salvation in the three stories. With respect to the latter, Winn describes the penitent harlot in d’Auge’s regrets, the providence found in Burlamacchi’s story, and the devotional practices in du Laurens’s account. She also provides context for the writings themselves through analyses of the question of female authorship in the Renaissance and explanations of the different genres presented in this book in the context of the Renaissance, such as the *livre de raison*. Winn concludes the introduction with a note on the techniques of translation.

D’Auge’s “Pitiful and Macabre Regrets” is a twelve-page testimony of a repentant woman who had an affair with another man and then had her husband murdered, for which she was sentenced to death. The text serves to reinforce patriarchal values and social order through the voice of Marguerite and to show her as someone who accepts society’s judgment upon her crime. It also portrays D’Auge as an example of the converted sinner. Burlamacchi’s “Memoirs Concerning Her Father’s Family” tells about her family’s travels during the French Wars of Religion. Burlamacchi was an Italian Protestant whose parents fled to France in order to escape persecution. The story shows how God watched over the family during a time of religious persecution. It also talks about important events in Reformation history. Du Laurens’s “Genealogy” is a daughter’s tribute to her mother and her mother’s role in the family history.

It also discusses how the family's early history shaped future generations through its emphasis on salvation and the important role God played in the family's life.

This book definitely deserves to be read. Not only is the introduction very thorough in its analysis of the text, it also raises many scholarly questions concerning the texts themselves. Its discussion of sin and salvation also serves to demonstrate different views of religion held in the Renaissance. The texts themselves contain abundant references and many explanatory notes, while the bibliography adds important secondary sources.

The translation of D'Auge's regrets is very vivid and powerful. One feels, while reading, that one is actually there, present with this repentant woman. Burlamacchi's memoir, in contrast, reads more like a history text—a factual account of what happened. Finally, Du Lauren's genealogy takes on a personal voice to express her family's story and recounts anecdotes that make the text more interesting to read.

It is interesting to note that this is the first English translation of these texts. Clearly, this is an effort to make these texts available to a larger audience, and by an expert in the field. While these texts are not in the original languages, they serve to highlight and bring to life these accounts to the English-speaking reader and, further, to explain nuances in clearer ways. The accessibility provided by this translation—and, one hopes, by many more like it to come—will enable the study of French women writers in early modern France to grow even more fruitful. For this reason, I recommend this book to any English-speaking reader interested in the portrayal of early modern women in France or in the study of salvation as exemplified by Protestant and Catholic women's writings.

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